

## CHAPTER 53

# PELLA MUNICIPAL AIRPORT HEIGHT REGULATIONS

53.01 Short Title  
53.02 Definitions  
53.03 Airport Zones  
53.04 Airport Zone Height Limitations  
53.05 Use Restrictions  
53.06 Nonconforming Uses

53.07 Permits  
53.08 Enforcement  
53.09 Board of Adjustment  
53.10 Appeals  
53.11 Judicial Review

**53.01 SHORT TITLE.** This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the Pella Municipal Airport Height Zoning Ordinance.

**53.02 DEFINITIONS.** As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires:

1. "Airport" means the Pella Municipal Airport.
2. "Airport elevation" means the highest point of an airport's usable landing area measured in feet above mean sea level, which elevation is established to be 880 feet.
3. "Airport surface" means a surface longitudinally centered on the extended runway centerline, extending outward and upward from the end of the primary surface and at the same slope as the approach zone height limitation slope set forth in this chapter. In plan the perimeter of the approach surface coincides with the perimeter of the approach zone height limitation slope set forth in this chapter.
4. "Approach, transitional, horizontal and conical zones" are the zones set forth in this chapter.
5. "Board of Adjustment" means the board consisting of two (2) members from the City of Pella, appointed by the City Council, and two (2) members from Marion County, appointed by the Marion County Board of Supervisors, and one selected by a majority vote of the four (4) appointed members as provided in this chapter.
6. "Conical surface" means a surface extending outward and upward from the periphery of the horizontal surface at a slope of thirty-four to one (34:1) for a horizontal distance of 4,000 feet.
7. "Hazard to air navigation height" means an obstruction determined to have a substantial adverse effect on the safe and efficient utilization of the navigable airspace for the purpose of determining the

height limits in all zones set forth in this chapter and shown on the zoning map, the datum shall be mean sea level elevation unless otherwise specified.

8. "Horizontal surface" means a horizontal plane 150 feet above the established airport elevation, the perimeter of which in plan coincides with the perimeter of the horizontal zone.

9. "Larger than utility runway" means a runway that is constructed for and intended to be used by propeller-driven aircraft of greater than 12,500 pounds maximum gross weight and jet-powered aircraft.

10. "Nonconforming use" means any preexisting structure, object of natural growth, or use of land, which is inconsistent with the provisions of this chapter or any amendment thereto.

11. "Non-precision instrument runway" means a runway having an existing instrument approach procedure utilizing air navigation facilities with only horizontal guidance, or area type navigation equipment, for which a straight-in non-precision instrument approach procedure has been approved or planned.

12. "Obstruction" means any structure, growth or other object, including a mobile object, which exceeds a limiting height set forth in this chapter.

13. "Person" means an individual, firm, partnership, corporation, company, association, joint stock association, or governmental entity; and includes a trustee, a receiver, an assignee, or a similar representative of any of them.

14. "Precision instrument runway" means a runway having an existing instrument approach procedure utilizing an Instrument Landing System (ILS) or a Precision Approach Radar (PAR). It also means a runway for which a precision approach system is planned and is so indicated on an approved airport layout plan or any other planning document.

15. "Primary surface" means a surface longitudinally centered on a runway. When the runway has a specially prepared hard surface, the primary surface extends 200 feet beyond each end of that runway; when the runway has no specially prepared hard surface, or planned hard surface, the primary surface ends at each end of that runway. The width of the primary surface is set forth in this chapter. The elevation of any point on the primary surface is the same as the elevation of the nearest point on the runway centerline.

16. "Runway" means a defined area on an airport prepared for landing and takeoff of aircraft along its length.
17. "Structure" means an object, including a mobile object, constructed or installed by man, including, but without limitation, buildings, towers, cranes, smokestacks, earth formation, and overhead transmission lines.
18. "Transitional surface" means those surfaces which extend outward at ninety degree (90°) angles to the runway centerline and the runway centerline extended at a slope of seven feet (7') horizontally for each foot vertically from the sides of the primary and approach surfaces to where they intersect the horizontal and conical surfaces. Transitional surfaces for those portions of the precision approach surfaces, which project through and beyond the limits of the conical surface, extend a distance of 5,000 feet measured horizontally from the edge of the approach surface and at ninety degree (90°) angles to the extended runway centerline.
19. "Tree" means any object of natural growth.
20. "Utility runway" means a runway that is constructed for and intended to be used by propeller driven aircraft of 12,500 pounds maximum gross weight and less.
21. "Visual runway" means a runway intended solely for the operation of aircraft using visual approach procedures.

**53.03 AIRPORT ZONES.** In order to carry out the provisions of this chapter, there are hereby created and established certain zones which include all of the land lying beneath the approach surfaces, transitional surfaces, horizontal surfaces and conical surfaces as they apply to the Pella Municipal Airport. Such zones are shown on the Pella Municipal Airport FAR Part 77 Surface map consisting of one sheet, prepared by Clapsaddle-Garber Associates, Inc., and dated September 24, 1995, and revised September 25, 1998, which is attached to Ordinance 490 and made a part hereof. An area located in more than one of the following zones is considered to be only in the zone with the more restrictive height limitation. The various zones are hereby established and defined as follows:

1. Larger Than Utility Runway Non-precision Instrument Approach Zone. The inner edge of this approach zone coincides with the width of the primary surface and is 500 feet wide. The approach zone expands outward uniformly to a width of 3,500 feet at a horizontal distance 10,000 feet from the primary surface. Its centerline is the continuation of the centerline of the runway.

2. Transitional Zones. The transitional zones are the areas beneath the transitional surfaces.
3. Horizontal Zone. The horizontal zone is established by swinging arcs of 10,000 feet radii from the center of each end of the primary surface of each runway and connecting the adjacent arcs by drawing lines tangent to those arcs. The horizontal zone does not include the approach and transitional zones.

**53.04 AIRPORT ZONE HEIGHT LIMITATIONS.** Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, no structure shall be erected, altered, or maintained, and no tree shall be erected, altered, or maintained, and no tree shall be allowed to grow in any zone created by this chapter to a height in excess of the applicable height limit herein established for such zone. Such applicable height limitations are hereby established for each of the zones in question as follows:

1. Utility Runway Non-precision Instrument Approach Zone. Slopes thirty-four feet (34') outward for each foot upward beginning at the end of and at the same elevation as the primary surface and extending to a horizontal distance of 10,000 feet along the extended runway centerline.
2. Transitional Zones. Slope seven feet (7') outward for each foot upward beginning at the sides of and at the same elevation as the primary surface and the approach surface, and extending to a height of 150 feet above the airport elevation or at an elevation of 1,030 feet above mean sea level. In addition to the foregoing, there are established height limits sloping seven feet (7') outward for each foot upward beginning at the sides of and at the same elevation as the approach surface, and extending to where they intersect the conical surface. Where the precision instrument runway approach zone projects beyond the conical zone, there are established height limits sloping seven feet (7') outward for each foot upward beginning at the sides of and at the same elevation as the approach surface, and extending a horizontal distance of 5,000 feet measured at ninety degree (90°) angles to the extended runway centerline.
3. Horizontal Zone. Established at 150 feet above the airport elevation or at an elevation of 1,030 feet above mean sea level.
4. Conical Zone. Slopes twenty feet (20') outward for each foot upward beginning at the periphery of the horizontal zone and at 150 feet above the airport elevation and extending to a height of 350 feet above the airport elevation.

5. Excepted Height Limitations. Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as prohibiting the construction or maintenance of any structure or growth of any tree to a height up to fifty feet (50') above the surface of the land.

**53.05 USE RESTRICTIONS.** Notwithstanding any other provisions of this chapter, no use may be made of the land or water within any zone established by this chapter in such a manner as to create electrical interference with navigational signals or radio communication between the airport and aircraft, make it difficult for pilots to distinguish between airport lights and others, result in glare in the eyes of pilots using the airport, impair visibility in the vicinity of the airport, create bird strike hazards, or otherwise in any way endanger or interfere with the landing, takeoff or maneuvering of aircraft intending to use the airport.

**53.06 NONCONFORMING USES.**

1. Existing Structures. The regulations prescribed by this chapter shall not be construed to require the removal, lowering, or other change or alteration of any structure or tree not conforming to the regulations of the effective date of the ordinance codified in this chapter, or otherwise interfere with the continuance of nonconforming use. Nothing contained herein shall require any change in the construction, alteration, or intended use of any structure, the construction or alteration of which was begun prior to the effective date of such ordinance, and is diligently prosecuted.
2. Marking and Lighting. Notwithstanding the preceding provision of this section, the owner of any existing nonconforming structure or tree is hereby required to permit the installation, operation and maintenance thereon of such markers and lights as shall be deemed necessary by the Pella City Engineer to indicate to the operators of aircraft in the vicinity of the airport the presence of such airport obstruction. Such markers and lights shall be installed, operated, and maintained at the expense of the City of Pella.

**53.07 PERMITS.**

1. Future Uses. Except as specifically provided in paragraphs A, B and C of this subsection, no material change shall be made in the use of land, no structure shall be erected or otherwise established, and no tree shall be planted in any zone hereby created unless a permit therefor shall have been applied for and granted. Each application for a permit shall indicate the purpose for which the permit is desired, with sufficient particularity to permit it to be determined whether the resulting use,

structure, or tree would conform to the regulations herein prescribed. If such determination is in the affirmative, the permit shall be granted. No permit for a use inconsistent with the provisions of this chapter shall be granted unless a variance has been approved in accordance with subsection 4 of this section.

A. In the area lying within the limits of the horizontal zone and conical zone, no permit shall be required for any tree or structure less than seventy-five feet (75') of vertical height above the ground, except when such tree or structure would extend above the height limits prescribed for such zones.

B. In areas lying within the limits of the approach zones, but at a horizontal distance of not less than 4,200 feet from each end of the runway, no permit shall be required for any tree or structure less than 75 feet of vertical height above the ground, except when such tree or structure would extend above the height limit prescribed for such approach zones.

C. In the areas lying within the limits of the transition zones beyond the perimeter of the horizontal zone, no permit shall be required for any tree or structure less than 75 feet of vertical height above the ground, except when such tree or structure would extend above the height limit prescribed for such transition zones.

Nothing contained in any of the foregoing exceptions shall be construed as permitting or intending to permit any construction, or alteration of any structure, or growth of any tree in excess of any of the height limits established by this chapter except as set forth in this chapter.

2. Existing Uses. No permit shall be granted that would allow the establishment or creation of an obstruction or permit a nonconforming use, structure or tree to become a greater hazard to air navigation than it was on the effective date of the ordinance codified in this chapter or any amendments thereto or than it is when the application for a permit is made. Except as indicated, all applications for such a permit shall be granted.

3. Nonconforming Uses Abandoned or Destroyed. Whenever the Zoning Administrator determines that a nonconforming tree or structure has been abandoned or more than fifty percent (50%) torn down, physically deteriorated, or decayed, no permit shall be granted that would allow such structure or tree to exceed the applicable height limit or otherwise deviate from the Zoning Regulations.

4. Any person desiring to erect or increase the height of any structure, or permit the growth of any tree, or use property, not in accordance with the regulations prescribed in this chapter may apply to the Board of Adjustment for a variance from such regulations. The application for variance shall be accompanied by a determination from the Federal Aviation Administration as to the effect of the proposal on the operation of air navigation facilities and the safe, efficient use of navigable airspace. Such variances shall be allowed where it is duly found that a literal application or enforcement of the regulations will result in unnecessary hardship and relief granted, will not be contrary to the public interest, will not create a hazard to air navigation, will do substantial justice, and will be in accordance with the spirit of this chapter. Additionally, no application for variance to the requirements of this chapter may be considered by the Board of Adjustment unless a copy of the application has been furnished to the City of Pella Airport Committee for advice as to the aeronautical effects of the variance. If the Airport Committee does not respond to the application within fifteen (15) days after receipt, the Board of Adjustment may act on its own to grant or deny said application.

5. **Obstruction Marking and Lighting.** Any permit or variance granted may, if such action is deemed advisable to effectuate the purpose of this chapter and be reasonable in the circumstances, be so conditioned as to require the owner of the structure or tree in question to install, operate, and maintain, at the owner's expense, such markings and lights as may be necessary. If deemed proper by the Board of Adjustment, this condition may be modified to require the owner to permit the City, at its own expense, to install, operate, and maintain the necessary markings and lights.

**53.08 ENFORCEMENT.** It shall be the duty of the Zoning Administrator to administer and enforce the regulations prescribed herein. Applications for permits and variances shall be made to the Zoning Administrator upon a form published for that purpose. Applications required by this chapter to be submitted to the Zoning Administrator shall be promptly considered and granted or denied. The Zoning Administrator shall forthwith transmit to the Board of Adjustment all documents relating to an application for action by the Board of Adjustment.

**53.09 BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT.** There is hereby created a Board of Adjustment to have and exercise the following powers:

1. To hear and decide appeals from any order, requirement, decision or determination made by the Zoning Administrator in the enforcement of this chapter.
2. To hear and decide special exceptions to the terms of this chapter upon which such Board of Adjustment under such regulations may be required to pass; and
3. To hear and decide specific variances.

The Board of Adjustment shall consist of two (2) members from the City of Pella, appointed by the Pella City Council, and two (2) members from Marion County, appointed by the Marion County Board of Supervisors, and one additional member to act as Chairperson and to be selected by a majority vote of the four (4) appointed members. Members shall be removable for cause by the appointing authority upon written charges and after public hearing. Vacancies shall be filled for the unexpired term of any member whose office becomes vacant in the same manner in which said member was selected. The terms of the members of the Board of Adjustment shall be staggered terms of five (5) years. The Board of Adjustment shall adopt rules for its governance and procedure in harmony with the provisions of this chapter. Meetings of the Board of Adjustment shall be held at the call of the chairperson and at such other times as the Board of Adjustment may determine. The Chairperson, or, in the absence of the Chairperson, the acting chairperson, may administer oaths and compel the attendance of witnesses. All hearings of the Board of Adjustment shall be public. The Board of Adjustment shall keep minutes of its proceedings showing the vote, indicating such fact, and shall keep records of its examinations and other official actions, all of which shall immediately be filed in the office of the Zoning Administrator and on due cause shown. The Board of Adjustment shall make written findings of facts and conclusions of law giving the facts upon which it acted and its legal conclusions from such facts in reversing, affirming or modifying any order, requirement, decision, or determination which comes before it under the provisions of this chapter. The concurring vote of a majority of the members of the Board of Adjustment shall be sufficient to reverse any order, requirement, decision or determination of the Zoning Administrator or decide in favor of the applicant on any matter upon which it is required to pass under this chapter or to effect variation to this chapter.

**53.10 APPEALS.** Any person aggrieved, or any taxpayer affected, by any decision of the Zoning Administrator made in the administration of this chapter may appeal to the Board of Adjustment. All appeals hereunder must be taken within a reasonable time as provided by the rules of the Board of Adjustment, by filing with the Zoning Administrator a notice of appeal specifying the



grounds thereof. The Zoning Administrator shall forthwith transmit to the Board of Adjustment all the papers constituting the record upon which the action appealed from was taken. An appeal shall stay all proceedings in furtherance of the action appealed from unless the Zoning Administrator certifies to the Board of Adjustment, after the notice of appeal has been filed with it, that by reason of the facts stated in the certificate a stay would, in the opinion of the Zoning Administrator, cause imminent peril to life or property. In such case, proceedings shall not be stayed except by the order of the Board of Adjustment on notice to the Zoning Administrator and on due cause shown. The Board of Adjustment shall fix a reasonable time for hearing appeals, give public notice and due notice to the parties in interest, and decide the same within a reasonable time. Upon the hearing, any party may appear in person or by agent or by attorney. The Board of Adjustment may, in conformity with the provisions of this chapter, reverse or affirm, in whole or in part, or modify the order, requirement, decision or determination appealed from and may make such order, requirement, decision or determination as may be appropriate under the circumstances.

**53.11 JUDICIAL REVIEW.** Any person aggrieved, or any taxpayer affected, by any decision of the Board of Adjustment, may appeal to the Court of Record as provided in Chapter 414.15 of the Code of Iowa.